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CIRCULAR,
CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF ORDER,

OF THE

SENATE

IN

Union College,

FOUNDED BY THE CLASS GRADUATING IN

MDCCCL.

SCHENECTADY:

RIGGS & NORRIS, PRINTERS, No. 23, UNION-STREET.

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1840.



Union university, Schenectady, N. Y.

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CIRCULAR.

To

DEAR SIR,

You receive herewith, a copy of the Constitution and Rules of the SENATE.

Confident that you feel a deep interest in all that concerns your *Alma Mater*, and in all measures adopted to promote the improvement of her younger children—the members of the Senate have instructed me to apprise you of their organization, and to ask you to aid them, as far as may be in your power, in this their new plan, by which they hope to become more efficient and useful in the discharge of their future duties.

Early in October last, a meeting of the Senior Class was held for the purpose of securing the objects designated in the Preamble to the Constitution. As a school for the attainment of these objects, we now feel convinced, from experience, that our Association affords facilities which it will not be possible hereafter or elsewhere to combine. The Literary Societies, which have long existed in College, and with some one of which you were doubtless connected, are in a prosperous condition. The debates are conducted with spirit, and their extensive and well selected libraries continue to furnish their rich and increasing stores to enlarge the knowledge of the members. There are many reasons, however, which have induced students generally to retire from these societies at an early period in the Senior year; the principal of which is, the propriety of relieving from the constraint of their presence the younger members, and allowing them to enjoy all the advantages to be derived from the debates and the management of business. Still, the Seniors need even more than at any previous part of their collegiate course, facilities for improvement in extemporaneous speaking, and for becoming familiar with those rules and usages, which prevail in parliamentary assemblies. To attain these ends, the Senate has been formed, and has met with eminent success. It is composed of persons whose pursuits are the same, and who are, as nearly as is possible, equals in academic rank, talent and attainment. The large number of its members constitutes a strong stimulus to exertion; while at the same time, the relations which exist among them are such as to ensure the constant exercise of mutual forbearance and kindness. They are at least the sons of the same *Alma Mater*. It embraces within the range of subjects for its discussion almost every question, which is endowed with interest to the scholar, the statesman and general philanthropist—Membership commences at a period when the mind is partially matured, and qual-

ified to estimate the importance and discuss the merits of those questions. And what is perhaps, its highest recommendation, its exercises are carried on contemporaneously with those of the recitation room; and thus that tendency to looseness of thought and language, which is so often and so justly made an objection to debating societies, is counteracted by frequent attention to written composition and the constant pursuit of severe studies.

Several attempts have been made to form an efficient and permanent association of the Alumni of our College. For various reasons, these attempts have failed. It is believed, that the provisions in the Constitution, relative to the perpetuation and annual meetings of the Senate, will be effective in securing so interesting and desirable an object. Every member, having participated for a year in the benefits of the institution, will feel desirous of continuing those benefits to others, and will exert himself to make his annual pilgrimage to these retreats, which so many of our Alumni declare to have been the scene where they have passed the happiest portion of their lives. We feel confident, dear sir, that in inviting you to be present at our first anniversary, to be held on the 4th Wednesday of July next, and in endeavoring to enlist your sympathies and exertions in behalf of our Association, we are asking you to do that, which will result in the improvement of the members of our College and in the increase of your own happiness. When in obedience to the 11th Article of our Constitution, we shall assemble year after year to exchange salutations, and consult on the best modes of perpetuating the existence and promoting the welfare of the Senate; when even the voice of debate shall be hushed, and no sounds heard but such as issue from hearts filled with affectionate recollections—then shall we be happy in the reflection, that we have had some agency in establishing an institution, which has benefited ourselves and our successors, and which has added number, interest and variety to college associations.

Very respectfully,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS C. REED,

President of the Senate.

UNION COLLEGE, March 1st, 1840.

CONSTITUTION.

PREAMBLE.

WE, the Members of the Senior Class in Union College, for the purpose of advancing in general knowledge, of improving in debating and extemporaneous speaking, and of becoming acquainted with the rules and usages of parliamentary assemblages, do form ourselves into a body to be called the SENATE; and to attain our ends, we sign, and promise to obey the following Constitution and Rules of Order:

ARTICLE I.—OF THE TIME OF MEETING.

The Senate shall meet every Saturday, except the first, of each Collegiate term, at 9 o'clock A. M.

ARTICLE II.—OF OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES.

§1. The officers of the Senate shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian.

§2. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Senate; at the first regular meeting after his election, to deliver an address; and from time to time to present, for the consideration of the Senate, by messages, such suggestions and measures as in his opinion shall seem conducive to the public good; which suggestions and measures, shall be referred to committees, who shall report on them; their reports shall then be submitted to the consideration of the Senate.

§3. It shall be the duty of the Vice President to preside during the absence of the President; and in case of the President's resignation or removal from College, to perform all the duties which would devolve on him during his term of office.

§4. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep in a book provided for that purpose, the minutes of the Senate; in which shall be accurately stated the names of absentees, the course of proceedings, the names of the debaters, with the sides they have taken, and the final vote taken on all questions considered by the Senate.

§5. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive and keep all monies belonging to the Senate; to report at the last meeting of his term of office on the condition of the treasury, stating in his report his views of finance in general; which report shall always be referred to a committee of the whole Senate.

§6. It shall be the duty of the Librarian to take charge of the Library, to keep in a book provided for the purpose, the names of donors and the titles of all books and public documents presented, and to impose such restrictions on the members drawing therefrom as the Senate may direct.

§7. A committee consisting of one from each Senatorial District, called a book committee, shall be appointed at the last meeting of each term, who shall recommend books, and purchase such as the Senate may direct; and who shall be empowered to use all justifiable means to increase the tone and value of the Library.

§8. There shall be appointed each term, a standing committee on absences, consisting of one Senator from each District, who shall have power to take into consideration the excuses of delinquents, and to impose or remit fines as they shall deem right and proper.

ARTICLE III.—OF ELECTIONS.

§1. All elections of officers shall be by ballot; and whoever shall receive the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected; and at all elections two members shall be appointed by the Chair as tellers.

§2. All committees shall be appointed by the presiding officer, unless the Senate shall otherwise direct.

§3. The President shall be elected at the last meeting of each Collegiate term, and shall continue in office until the last meeting of the following term.

§4. The Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian, shall be elected at the fifth meeting, and the last meeting of each Collegiate term.

ARTICLE IV.—OF MEMBERSHIP.

§1. No person shall be an attending member of the Senate, (except the *President*, who shall be a member of the Faculty,) unless he is a member of the Senior Class for the time being, or unless he recite regularly with the class. Such members only as are here indicated, shall be eligible to office; nor shall any others have a right to vote at elections, or on any question before the Senate. The only exceptions to this section, are such as are contained in the following section.

§2. At the last regular meeting but one of the third term of the Senior year, the whole Junior Class shall be invited to become members of the Senate. At the meeting next ensuing, after the regular duties of the Senate shall have been performed, they shall be duly initiated according to a form hereinafter provided. After such initiation, the connection of the Senior Class with the Senate, as attending members, shall cease, and the new members shall proceed to the election of their officers for the ensuing term—the late President presiding at the election. The Senior Class shall henceforth be honorary members of the Senate, and shall be entitled to admission within the bar to participate in the debates, and to enjoy all the privileges of attending members except the right of voting.

§3. The Faculty of the College shall be *ex officio* honorary members of the Senate, and all the graduates of Union College shall be honorary members; and no person shall be a member of the Senate unless he be a graduate of Union College, or belong to the Faculty thereof.

ARTICLE V.—OF A QUORUM.

§1. Twenty attending members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE VI.—OF ABSENCES.

§1. It shall be the duty of every member to be present at the meetings of the Senate; and for every absence at the calling of the roll, the absentee shall pay into the treasury the sum of six and a quarter cents.

ARTICLE VII.—OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS.

§1. Extra meetings of the Senate may be called at the discretion of the President, or if ten members request it in writing, the President shall

call an extra meeting; and all notices of such meetings shall be signed by the President, and posted on the door of the College post office, at least six hours before the time at which the meeting is to be held; but if notice of extra meetings can be given in chapel, one hour only may intervene between the notice and the hour of meeting.

ARTICLE VIII.—OF QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE.

§1. The subjects discussed by the Senate shall be confined to Political Science, Political Economy, Ethics, Mental Philosophy and Literature.

§2. All questions for debate shall be introduced by resolution. The resolution, if seconded, shall be referred to a committee of the whole Senate. It shall then be freely discussed under such restrictions only as are specified in the rules of order relating to “*Debates* ;” but on no occasion shall the previous question be called.

§3. All questions, except those specially provided for in this constitution, shall be decided by a majority of members present.

ARTICLE IX.—OF SENATORIAL DISTRICTS.

§1. The members of the Senate, with reference to their residences, shall be divided into seven classes :—those rooming in the North Hall and north section of the North College, shall form the first class; those rooming in the middle section of the North College, the second class; those rooming in the south section of the North College, the third class; those rooming in the north section of the South College; the fourth class; those rooming in the middle section of the South College, the fifth class; those rooming in the south section of the South College, and in the South Hall, the sixth class; and those rooming in town, the seventh class. These residences shall be called districts; and whenever, in debate, a member is alluded to, it shall not be by name, but as the *Gentleman* or *Senator* from the first district, &c.

ARTICLE X.—OF THE TREASURY.

§1. Each attending member shall pay into the treasury, some time during the second week of each Collegiate term, the sum of twenty-five cents.

§2. The regular receipts of the treasury shall be appropriated to the purchase of books, periodicals, and the necessary stationary for the use of the Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian, and to no other purposes; nor shall any disbursements be made except by a vote of a majority of the members present at a regular meeting of the Senate.

ARTICLE XI.—OF THE ANNIVERSARY.

§1. There shall be an annual celebration of the Senate, on the afternoon and evening of Commencement day. The attending and honorary members of the Senate shall meet at two o'clock P. M. of said day, to exchange salutations, to consult concerning measures calculated to perpetuate the Senate, and promote its interests, and to dine; and in the evening an address shall be delivered by the orator.

§2. The orator shall be elected by ballot at the first meeting of the second term *Senior*. The person elected shall be a graduate of Union College.

ARTICLE XII.—OF ALTERATIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

§1. This Constitution shall not be altered or amended, unless notice be given of the proposed alteration or amendment at least one regular meeting before it is laid before the Senate; it shall then lie on the table six regular meetings, when it may be discussed; and if two-thirds of all the members present, at any regular meeting of the Senate, shall vote for such alteration or amendment, it shall be made.

RULES OF ORDER.

SECTION I.—ORDER OF BUSINESS AT REGULAR MEETINGS.

1. Calling of the roll.
2. Journal of the last meeting.
3. Reports of committees, in such order as the President shall direct.
4. Debates.
5. Miscellaneous business.

SECTION II.—ARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS.

The Secretary shall keep a list of all bills, resolutions, and reports of committees, which are committed to a committee of the whole Senate, in the order in which they have been introduced; which list shall be called the "General Orders." The subjects on the general orders shall be taken up and discussed in the order in which they then stand, unless the Senate shall otherwise determine. But before any subject on the general orders shall be debated, it shall have been made the special order of the day for a particular day, at least one week beforehand.

SECTION III.—OF DEBATES.

RULE 1st. All questions for debate which stand on the general orders, shall be referred to a committee of the whole Senate, in which they shall be freely discussed in the following manner:—The President having appointed some member as chairman of the committee, shall leave the chair, and take his seat elsewhere as any other member, and be at liberty to take part in the debate. Each member may speak twice in committee of the whole, but not the second time until every member wishing to speak shall have spoken. After a question has passed through the committee of the whole, it may be farther discussed in the House, when each member may speak once; but in no case shall a member speak more than 15 minutes at one time.

RULE 2d. No amendment can be made to a question in committee of the whole.

RULE 3d. When a member means to speak, he is to rise in his place, and address himself to the chairman, who shall designate him by his name or his residence, that the Senate may know who it is that speaks.

RULE 4th. No member is to speak impertinently or beside the question, superfluously or tediously, nor to speak reviling or unmannerly words against the Senate or any particular member. The nature and consequence of a measure may be reprobated, but to arraign the motives of those who propose or advocate it, is against order. And every member is bound by his gentlemanly demeanor and language to sustain the dignity of the Senate.

SECTION IV.—OF MOTIONS.

RULE 1st. When a motion is made, it is not to be put nor debated, until it is seconded.

RULE 2d. When a motion is seconded, it must be stated by the chair before debate; and every such motion shall be reduced to writing if the President or any member desire it.

RULE 3d. After a motion is stated by the President, it shall be deemed to be in the possession of the House; but it may be withdrawn at any time before decision or amendment.

SECTION V.—MISCELLANEOUS RULES.

RULE 1st. Each member is to have his place assigned him by the President, which he is not to leave unnecessarily during the sittings of the Senate.

RULE 2d. All questions of order shall be decided by the Chair, from which decision, however, an appeal may be made to the House.

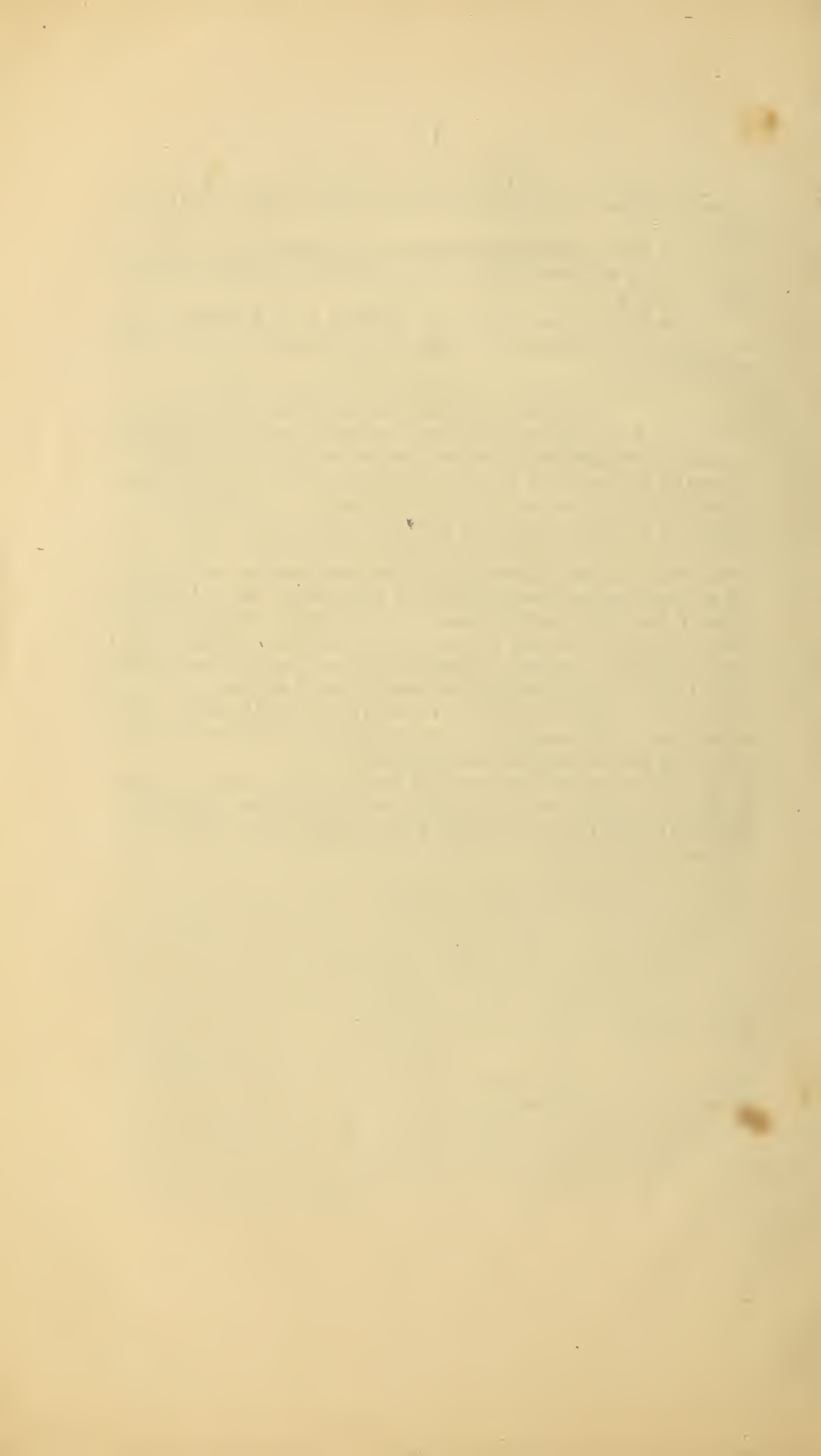
RULE 3d. A question of order may be adjourned to give time to examine precedents.

RULE 4th. A member called to order shall immediately sit down, unless permitted to explain; and the House, if appealed to, shall decide on the case but without debate; if there be no appeal, the decision of the chair shall be submitted to.

RULE 5th. The address and message of the President shall be always in order; and the reference to committees, as provided by the constitution, of suggestions contained in the message, may be made immediately after it is delivered.

RULE 6th. A motion to adjourn shall be always in order, and it shall be decided without debate. When the Senate has resolved to adjourn, every member shall remain seated until the President has left the chair.

RULE 7th. No alteration shall be made in the rules of order, unless it is proposed at one regular meeting before it is discussed and acted on; but the rules may be suspended for good reasons, if a majority of the members present so determine.

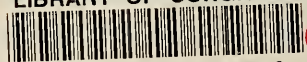


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